



## School district cuts

# 1,028 teachers get initial layoff letters

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Inland Valley school districts, many teetering on the edge of a financial abyss, have issued more than 1,000 layoff notices to teachers and staff.

The state deadline to notify employees of pending layoffs was Monday, with more than 21,000 throughout California receiving notices they may not be rehired after June 30.

Not all the threatened layoffs will be carried out. The final tally depends on the state budget to be adopted for the coming fiscal year. Last year, 60 percent of the 26,000 teachers who received pink slips ended up losing their jobs.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell said he expected this year's actual job losses to be high, given the state's persistent budget problems.

"To date, 21,905 pink slips have been issued to teachers and other staff around the state this year," O'Connell said.

"While I understand the governor and the Legislature have tough decisions to make, these budget cuts are devastating our schools and

impacting our ability to do the most important job in our society, that is, to teach our children."

Locally, districts issued layoff notices as part of deep cutbacks being made to balance budgets for the 2010-11 school year.

"It's a sickening situation that school districts are placed in because of the budget," said Rick Carr, Mountain View School District superintendent. "This is not something that was created at the district level, this was created by the state."

The district sent out 25 layoff notices -- the first time in Carr's tenure that's happened. The south Ontario-based district has three elementary schools and one middle school.

It was also a first time for the Etiwanda School District.

"We've never had to do this before, it's devastating to let go of any employee," said Superintendent Shawn Judson. "Retirement incentives are being offered so that may help reduce the number of notices... but the budget cuts are so deep and ongoing in nature that it's such a different year than last year."

Although most districts issued layoff notices, only Alta Loma, Central and Mt. Baldy School districts managed to avoid sending them.

Early retirement helped save teachers in Central School District, said Lori Isom, assistant

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superintendent of business services of the Rancho Cucamonga district.

"We have seven teachers and one counselor that accepted that early retirement offer, and because of that we are not going to have to notice any teacher layoffs," she said.

Joe Tonan, Claremont faculty Association president, said teacher morale is at low point because of these layoffs, even among those who did not receive them.

"They've seen the effects of higher class sizes and how it hurts students' learning. They know that these (layoffs) are going to have students suffering and that's discouraging," Tonan said.

Associated Pomona Teachers President Tyra Weis said while teachers have done a good job working around the cuts in the past, this year the cutbacks will be seen and felt by the public.

In addition to the certificated layoffs, as many as 10,000 classified workers could be facing unemployment statewide, said O'Connell. School districts have 45 days to issue pink slips to those workers, who include bus drivers, maintenance workers and cafeteria staff.

Gov. Schwarzenegger's spokesman Aaron McLearn said Monday claims that education funding will be reduced are false.

"The governor has proposed protecting education while making devastating cuts in other

areas to deal with our current \$20 billion deficit," McLearn said. "We are funding education at exactly the same level as last year."

However, most districts were saved from sizeable layoffs a year ago by one-time federal stimulus money. That money is not available for 2010-11.

To help schools through these difficult economic times, O'Connell has called on the governor and Legislature to support SCA 6, which would give voters the authority to pass a local parcel tax with 55 percent of the vote, which is the same threshold required to approve local school bonds. These taxes could be used to support local schools.

Currently parcel taxes - direct taxes on each property within an area -- must be approved by a minimum of two-thirds or 66.6 percent vote. Inland Valley school districts have issued 1,028 layoff notices to teachers and staff for the next school year.

Alta Loma: 0 notices

Bonita Unified: 20 notices

Central: 0 notices

Chaffey Joint Union High School: 84 notices

Chino Valley Unified: 87 notices

Claremont Unified: 36 notices

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Cucamonga: 7 notices

Etiwanda: 87 notices

Fontana Unified: 187 notices

Mountain View: 25 notices

Mt. Baldy Joint: 0 notices

Ontario-Montclair: 142 notices

Pomona Unified: 251 notices

Upland Unified: 18 notices

Walnut Valley Unified: 84 notices

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